

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LAGOS 07603 01 OF 02 080727Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ARA-14 EA-09 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-14 ISO-00
DHA-02 DIWY-01 JUSE-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00
SS-15 NSC-05 SP-02 L-03 H-02 OIC-02 /109 W
-----098690 080741Z /14

P R 071449Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2137
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY ACCRA
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 LAGOS 07603

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PORG, SHUM, UN, NI
SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF WOMEN LAWYERS

SUMMARY: PRESIDENT OF NIGERIAN BRANCH OF THE INTERNATIONAL
FEDERATION OF WOMEN LAWYERS (FIDA) HAS ASKED EMBASSY TO
INTERCEDE WITH AMERICAN TREASURER OF ORGANIZATION'S EXECUTIVE
COUNCIL IN AN EFFORT TO ASSURE THAT PLANS TO HOLD A FIDA
CONFERENCE IN LAGOS THIS SEPTEMBER ARE NOT CANCELLED.
END SUMMARY.

1. NIGERIAN BRANCH OF FIDA IS SCHEDULED TO HOST THE ORGANIZA-
TION'S INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN LAGOS ON SEPTEMBER 4
THROUGH 10. THE CONFERENCE, THE THEME OF WHICH IS HUMAN
RIGHTS, HAS APPROVAL AND BACKING OF THE FMG. THE GOVERNMENT
HAS ALLOCATED 9,000 NAIRA (DOLS 135,000) TO COVER CONFERENCE
EXPENSES SUCH AS ACCOMMODATIONS AND HAS AGREED TO
PROVIDE THE NEW NATIONAL THEATRE GRATIS AS VENUE FOR THE
CONFERENCE. IN ADDITION, FMG IS PRINTING PROGRAMS AND OTHER
CONFERENCE MATERIAL FREE OF CHARGE. NIGERIAN BRANCH HAS
UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 LAGOS 07603 01 OF 02 080727Z

ALREADY BEEN ADVANCED 60,000 NAIRA.

2. ACCORDING TO MRS. ADE BALOGUN, PRESIDENT NIGERIAN
CHAPTER OF FIDA, FMG HAS ALSO AGREED TO ISSUE VISAS TO
PERMIT ALL RPT ALL MEMBERS TO ENTER NIGERIA FOR CONFERENCE.
ONLY CAVEAT, WHICH FIDA HAS ACCEPTED, IS THAT DELEGATES
MUST NOT REPRESENT GOVERNMENTS. THE ONE HITCH IN THIS REPORT

OF WHOLE-HEARTED FMG SUPPORT FOR CONFERENCE TOOK PLACE LAST YEAR WHEN FMG ASKED BALOGUN ABOUT AN ALLEGATION THAT ONE MEMBER OF U.S. CHAPTER HAD CIA CONNECTIONS. AMERICANS ASSURED BALOGUN THAT CHARGE WAS BASELESS. FMG FAILED PROVIDE REQUESTED WRITTEN DOCUMENTATION TO BACK UP THE CHARGE, AND MATTER WAS DROPPED.

3. BALOGUN REPORTS THAT FORMER U.S. ATTORNEY GENERAL RAMSAY CLARK, SWEDISH FOREIGN MINISTER MRS. KAREN SODER AND GHANAIAAN JUSTICE ANNIE JIAGGE HAVE ALL ACCEPTED INVITATIONS TO ADDRESS THE CONFERENCE.

4. AFTER CONFERENCE, MANY MEMBERS OF FIDA, INCLUDING SOME FROM THE AMERICAN CONTINGENT, ARE PLANNING A WEST AFRICAN TRIP WHICH CALLS FOR THEM TO VISIT ACCRA, ABIDJAN AND DAKAR.

5. ON JULY 5, BALOGUN RECEIVED LETTER ADDRESSED TO MEMBERS OF FIDA EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FROM COUNCIL'S TREASURER MISS GERTRUDE ABERLIN, A U.S. CITIZEN WHOSE SISTER MISS DORA ABERLIN IS FIDA'S ALTERNATE UN REPRESENTATIVE. (FIDA IS RECOGNIZED BY THE UN AS A NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION. IN THE LETTER, MISS ABERLIN REFERRED TO "...ALARMING REPORTS OF UNREST, TENSION AND VERY POOR CONDITIONS IN THE WEST AFRICAN REGION IN GERNAL." AND REPORTED THAT "MANY" MEMBERS HAD CANCELLED THEIR RESERVATIONS AS A RESULT. ABERLIN SAID SHE HAD CHECKED WITH UNNAMED "RELIABLE SOURCES"

UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 LAGOS 07603 01 OF 02 080727Z

AND FOUND THE REPORTS TO BE TRUE. LETTER ALSO ASSERTED THAT GOVERNMENT OF IVORY COAST HAD CANCELLED CONFIRMED HOTEL RESERVATIONS AND THAT DESPITE ASSURANCES TO THE CONTRARY IT APPEARED THAT THE ISRAELI DELEGATES WOULD NOT BE ISSUED NIGERIAN VISAS AND THAT TAIWANESE WOULD ONLY BE ABLE TO OBTAIN ONE AFTER A LONG WAIT. FOR THESE REASONS ABERLIN URGED THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL TO POSTPONE THE CONFERENCE OR MOVE IT TO ANOTHER SITE.

6. BALOGUN AND MRS. ADUKE ALAKIJA, A NIGERIAN WHO IS CURRENT INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT OF FIDA, ARE NATURALLY CONCERNED AND ANGRY. FMG HAS PUT ITS PRESTIGE (AND MONEY) BEHIND THE CONFERENCE. PREPARATIONS ARE FAR ADVANCED. ACCOMMODATIONS HAVE BEEN RESERVED. BALOGUN REPORTS THAT RESERVATIONS AT HOTEL IVOIRE IN ABIDJAN WERE CANCELLED TO MAKE WAY FOR CONFERENCE OF FRENCH LAWYERS BUT THAT THERE ARE OTHER SUITABLE HOTELS. IN ANY EVENT, NIGERIAN ORGANIZERS DO NOT BELIEVE THAT POST-CONFERENCE TRAVEL OR POLITICAL UNCERTAINTY IN GHANA SHOULD IN ANY WAY AFFECT DECISION TO HOLD THE FIDA CONFERENCE IN NIGERIA. AS FOR THE VISA PROBLEM, BALOGUN SAYS THE MINISTRY EXTERNAL AFFAIRS ASSURED HER THAT SO LONG AS DELEGATES COME AS INDIVIDUALS AND NOT REPRESENTATIVES OF

GOVERNMENTS, THEY WILL BE ISSUED VISAS. IF TAIWANESE
OR ISRAELIS UNABLE OBTAIN VISAS BEFOREHAND, THEY ARE TO
BE ISSUED VISAS ON ARRIVAL IN LAGOS.

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PAGE 01 LAGOS 07603 02 OF 02 080732Z
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SS-15 NSC-05 L-03 H-02 SP-02 OIC-02 /109 W
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UNCLAS FINALS SECTION 2 OF 2 LAGOS 07603

7. ACTION REQUESTED: CONTACT MISS GERTRUDE ABERLIN, 150
NASSAU STREET, NEW YORK, NEW YORK, 10038 BY TELEPHONE TO
PROVIDE HER ACCURATE PICTURE OF CONDITIONS IN WEST AFRICA
GENERALLY AND NIGERIA IN PARTICULAR. IT MIGHT BE USEFUL
POINT OUT THAT UN ANTI-APARTHEID CONFERENCE IS SCHEDULED TO BE HELD
IN LAGOS AUGUST 22-27 AND THAT LAGOS INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR
SCHEDULED FOR NOVEMBER-DECEMBER. BOTH ARE EXAMPLES OF LAGOS'
CAPABILI-
TIES TO HOST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES. ABERLIN SHOULD BE ADVISED
OF FMG SUPPORT AND BACKING FOR CONFERENCE. PREPARATIONS
FOR FIDA CONFERENCE WELL ADVANCED AND CANCELLATION WOULD BE
ILL-RECEIVED NOT ONLY BY NIGERIAN BRANCH FIDA BUT ALSO BY
FMG. WHILE WE CANNOT ASSURE FIDA THAT ISRAELI AND TAIWANESE
DELEGATES WILL RECEIVE VISAS, BALOGUN BELIEVES SHE HAS
SATISFACTORY ASSURANCES FROM MEA THAT THE DELEGATES FROM THOSE
COUNTRIES (TWO FROM ISRAEL AND ONE FROM TAIWAN) WILL BE ABLE
ATTEND THE CONFERENCE. IF SHE HAS NOT DONE SO, ABERLIN MAY
WISH TO TALK ON THE PHONE WITH AMBASSADORS SANU AND/OR HARRIMAN
TO SEEK THEIR REACTION TO QUESTION OF VISAS BEFORE TAKING FURTHER
HASTY ACTION.
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PAGE 02 LAGOS 07603 02 OF 02 080732Z

USUN MIGHT ALSO WISH TO TALK TO ABERLIN. IF AFTER TALKING
WITH ABERLIN IT WOULD APPEAR TO BE HELPFUL FOR AMBASSADOR
TO CALL HER HE IS WILLING TO DO SO.
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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Drafter: n/a
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Executive Order: N/A
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Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
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Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
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Subject: INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF WOMEN LAWYERS SUMMARY: PRESIDENT OF NIGERIAN BRANCH OF THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF WOMEN LAWYERS (FIDA) HAS ASKED EM BAS
TAGS: PORG, SHUM, NI, UN, FIDA
To: STATE
Type: TE
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